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ABSTRACT

The London Borough of Hackney libraries faced many pressures in a time of increased demands for services and diminished resources. Declines in circulation from the adult and children's sections were compensated for by increased activity in the reference, archives, hospital and housebound readers services, interlibrary loan, and music departments. School class visits also increased. Comparative statistics for 1972-73 and 1973-74 finances, circulation, and reader registration are given in tabular form. (PF)

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LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

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1974-1975

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LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

Libraries and Amenities Committee

Annual Report of Borough Librarian 1973-74

Introduction

The last few years has seen an increasing awareness of the problem of illiteracy and many expressions of concern that, in spite of increasing educational opportunities, there is an apparent failure in western nations to solve the problem. It is estimated that in this country alone between two and five million people fail to achieve reading ability. In London it is estimated that about 60,000 school children have reading difficulties.

These are problems with which we must be vitally concerned. It is probable that in the current situation of rapid inflation when the living standards and recreational opportunities of the under-privileged sections of the community may be sharply reduced, the situation in areas such as Hackney could worsen considerably, and the need for our services intensify.

The same inflationary situation leads to inevitable financial stringency and the library service will find itself hard pressed to meet its continuing and increasing responsibilities with resources eroded at an apparently increasing rate. The rise in cost of both books and services has been steep; the cost of labour has almost doubled in five years.

It is against this background of increasing need for library services and diminishing resources available to meet these needs that the year's work has to be assessed.

In spite of all economic difficulties the Council pressed forward with its capital programme and the new Homerton Library building at the junction of Homerton High Street and Brooksby's Walk nears completion. An official opening for this new and long awaited service point has been fixed for 1st June 1974.

The new De Beauvoir library shell is now virtually complete and the interior fitting is now in progress. This library, forming part of a complex including a community centre and other community uses will pose new problems of co-operation. I sincerely hope that we shall be able to involve the library in all the activities likely to be undertaken at De Beauvoir and in turn, involve all users of other services with the library. Such involvement will bring new pressures to the branch staff but may well enable us to reach some part of the population who now fail to become regular readers.

We shall shortly be vacating the Kingsmead (part-time) Library building to enable a new Community Centre to be built on its site. Provision for a "library room" within the Centre has been made and this will probably be adequate to meet the needs of the very old and very young who might find the journey to the nearby Homerton Library unacceptable. A temporary service at Kingsmead will be provided in a Portakabin unit until the Centre is completed.

Unhappily little real progress has been achieved towards a much needed replacement building for the Eastway area. Preliminary plans have been drawn up and a site agreed with the Greater London Council but constant vigilance is necessary to avoid the possible loss of this project in the current economic situation. The squalid appearance of the existing corrugated iron wartime first aid post within an area of modern flats is something which the Council should be prepared to replace as a matter of some priority. It is a matter of conjecture whether the present structure can survive vandalism and deterioration very much longer and if progress towards an early building start cannot be made the Council may be faced with considerable abortive expenditure in maintaining a library service to the area's readers.

Some projects have had to be postponed during the present financial situation and amongst these is the extension of gramophone record lending provision to the modernised Clapton Library. It is also necessary to recognise that in spite of the inadequacies of the present Central Library the provision of any replacement or extension must now be viewed as a very long term project. A new Shoreditch District Library and a

new site for a combined library to replace Howard and the temporary structure at Somerford Grove must also now be viewed as extremely unlikely as long as present economic circumstances persist.

In spite of all difficulties the library service as a whole remains very much, in the words of the Unesco Manifesto on Public Libraries, "active and positive in its outlook, demonstrating the value of its services and encouraging their use; ... watchful for the emergence of new needs and interests in the community to be represented in its collections and activities". The various sections of this report reflects the fulfilment here in Hackney of these aims.

Bibliographical Services

The welcome and much needed increase in the book fund from £110,000 to £125,000 has obviously reflected itself in an increased workload but has enabled the book stock to be improved by the purchase of a wider range of titles and a larger number of copies of books in frequent demand.

It must be stressed however that with costs of new books increasing from between 10% and 17% each year, increases of this order must be achieved annually if the book stock situation is not to decline once more to a critical degree.

The sum of £125,000 may be considered a large sum to be spent on books, but once divided between the nineteen establishments and the various departments within those establishments it provides a very minimal sum per department. For example, the Wenlock Library's share of this sum is only £1,800. At an average cost of £2 per book this provides only 900 new books per year for all Wenlock readers, adult and children. When one considered that some 30,000 books are published annually an individual library's share of this output is certainly minimal.

The average cost per book added to stock at Hackney is £2.04 compared to a national average of £3.37 (July - December 1973) and it is only the purchase of large numbers of cheap editions, paperback and reprints that enables this figure to

be achieved while maintaining a reasonably adequate stock. Inevitably many of the more expensive books cannot now be purchased in adequate numbers and our increased borrowing from other libraries reflects one facet of our present difficulties.

In addition to the normal inflationary increases there are continual competing demands for additional finance from the book vote. During the current year much has been spent on improving the stock of the new Homerton Library both for adults and children. Additional money has also had to be found to form an initial stock for the service commenced during the year to patients of the Hackney Group of Hospitals. A nucleus of a special collection of books for illiterate adults has been purchased and work has already begun on completing an adult stock for the Kate Greenaway Library. These plus other continuing commitments are additional to the needs previously met from the book vote and the Committee must be aware that without additional provision it is only at the expense of other sections of the service that these additional commitments can be met.

Work on co-ordinating book selection in an attempt to ensure that existing funds are spent in the best interests of the entire library service has continued. Books previously appearing on shelves in several libraries are now purchased for fewer branches and local inter-library loans are now far more frequent than hitherto. All branches report increased use of the reservation system, always a reliable indication of an inadequate book stock. In an effort to speed this reservation system a daily list of reserves is circulated to every branch to ensure that if any copy of a reserve book is on the shelves at any of the nineteen branches it can be quickly made available for the reader. This system is expensive in staff time but it does result in a very much improved supply for reserved books and minimises to some degree a declining value of the book fund.

Discussions have continued on future developments in the field of micro-film catalogues and computerised cataloguing. The development of a computer output micro-film catalogue (C.O.M.) for L.A.S.E.R. holdings on a co-operative basis is being supported by all libraries in the S.E. Region. The

present cataloguing and book acquisition procedures are known to be costly and the possibility of computerised cataloguing through the L.O.L.A. consortium is being actively pursued. On a co-operative basis these possibilities become more feasible and more economic, but a final decision in this respect cannot be made until all present systems have been surveyed and a generally acceptable programme made available. While the present system of cataloguing is adequate and the catalogues available are up to date, accurate and effective, change is not immediately imperative but the sooner a generally acceptable programme becomes available the sooner economies can be suggested.

Adult Lending Libraries

A decline in the issue of adult books for home readers of 79,280 (approximately 4.5%) has been recorded over the year. This loss of issues is spread throughout all libraries except the Shoreditch District Library where a small increase is shown.

The industrial dispute towards the end of the financial year brought power shortages resulting in the "3 day week" and restrictions on evening television. Many people returned to the joys of reading and all libraries recorded increased use. Not only did issues for home reading go up by up to 10% but all libraries reported an increasing number of readers visiting the library and staying some hours in the restricted warmth we were able to provide through oil and gas fired boilers. It is hoped that some of the new and rediscovered readers using the libraries during this period will remain as regular users.

From the library users who read mainly for recreation come continual complaints of the shortage of "good type novels" and it is difficult to convince these readers that there are fewer good story tellers writing at the present time. Publishers appear to be issuing a larger number of reprints both in hard back and paper form but these often fail to satisfy the voracious fiction reader who has read them all before.

Following some suspicion that heavy overdue fines were having a deterrent effect upon the use of the library by some

readers, the Council agreed to experiment with a "fine free period" during April, May and June of 1973. Surprisingly, comment from many library users expressed concern that some penalty ought to be levied on readers who failed to honour the loan period. The reimposition of overdue fines after the three months "amnesty" drew a contrary reaction!

While conclusions to be drawn from the results of the experiment were inconclusive it was fairly evident that readers were keeping their books for a longer period while fines were not charged.

Arising from a report on the experiment submitted to the Committee a Book Recovery Officer was employed to recover badly overdue books. His efforts have reduced the number of books remaining unrecovered after 12 weeks by approximately 75%.

The first collections of books to provide help for adult illiterates were purchased towards the end of the year. Staff have worked in close co-operation with other specialist agencies in this field in order to co-ordinate our efforts with those engaged in the teaching of adult illiterates. Although the collections are on a very small scale in relation to the large numbers of potential borrowers they do appear to be beginning to meet a very real need. The staff time spent in meeting with the specialists, talking with the readers themselves and generally developing this side of the libraries service cannot be measured merely in terms of issues, but must be considered as a vital social service which will ultimately need to be developed in the area. Much more could be done to expand this work but additional finance for books and additional specialist staff would be required if the full potential of this project is to be achieved.

Another area where co-operation between Library Services and educational services has been very successful is that developed with the Walbrook College. The college moved into the building opposite the Shoreditch District Library in Pitfield Street in September 1973. Their library was not completed at that time and facilities for their students were offered and eagerly accepted in the Shoreditch Library. Over

250 students were enrolled to whom 13,000 books have been issued during the six months which the college has been operational.

Children's Libraries

Issues from the children's libraries, like those from the adult, are also down by about 5% from the previous year's total of 627,157 to the 1973-74 total of 596,356. This decline is spread throughout almost all children's libraries within the Borough.

School classes visiting the libraries have however increased, with current weekly visits now totalling 109. All but two of the full-time branches are actively engaged in this important part of the library service and even at the Central Library, where previously traffic problems had proved to be a serious deterrent, classes are now attending regularly. Every effort is made to ensure that these visits are enjoyable for the children. Activities include story telling, film strips or chats about books. Often the numbers of books actually issued to the class is not high but the whole activity is regarded as a public relations exercise whereby it is hoped that children will become familiar with the library, its books and the staff. In this way it is felt they may continue with the library habit even when a regular class visit is not part of their curriculum. Teachers and parents are not forgotten either and staff are invited to many functions in schools, play groups and other organisations. Every opportunity to make the library service known to the community is taken and the feed back of information from outside is of great interest and assistance in assessing the present and planning future programmes.

The separate children's library created last year by the partitioning of a section of the Woodberry Down Library has proved to be very successful. Approaches have now been made to interested local schools to arrange regular class visits to this library. Following the appointment of a Branch Children's Librarian to this branch in January 1974, it is hoped that a fuller utilisation of the Woodberry Down Children's Library will be achieved and that a far greater co-operation

with local schools and a wider range of children's activities will now prove possible.

Despite the high cost of children's books, it has been possible to maintain reasonable collections of children's books at all libraries.

To meet local needs it is essential that the stock of the children's libraries should relate to the community it serves and in an effort to ensure that this is the case all of the children's library staff now co-operatively review all children's fiction before final selection and addition to stock. Each new book is carefully scrutinised and only purchased for those libraries where it is considered a significant issue potential exists.

The experiment of providing paperback racks in children's libraries has proved to be very popular. Children obviously like paperbacks and actively prefer them to the hardback editions. Often it is noted that a paperback edition will issue regularly where the hardback edition of the same book has stayed on the shelves for many months. A pool of paperbacks has been created at the Central Library from which all Branch Children's Librarians may draw as the need arises. As with many other popular schemes the demand appears to be almost limitless and the resources which can be allocated to the scheme are the only restrictions which must be imposed.

It has always been the aim to make libraries attractive to children and the same attitude has been taken towards a range of extension activities. Lighter shows of puppetry and Punch and Judy have proved to be very popular as evening entertainments or as part of daytime holiday programmes at various branches in the Borough. The events of a more serious nature which can be staged in front of large audiences continue to be part of the regular programme of arts activities and children's matinees for ballet and drama events have played to capacity audiences of 600-800.

Whilst all these "created" entertainments are vital to the life of the Children's Library Services, equally important is to establish that the library is a good social centre.

Children are encouraged to come to the library to meet their friends, to have a chat with the staff, often because their homes are empty during the day and sometimes also in the evening. They bring with them smaller brothers or sisters and pass some time talking amongst themselves, playing chess or other board games, drawing or reading. The pleasant atmosphere which these activities create is a very rewarding objective for any Branch Children's Librarian.

Music and Record Libraries

It is pleasing to be able to report increased issues from these sections of the library service. The Music and Record Library appears to be a service which continues to expand each year and one which, if additional finances were to be made available, could develop at an even greater pace. Issues have increased from 64,111 in 1972-73 to 76,799 in 1973-74, an increase of 12,688 or 20%.

Much of this increase can be attributed to the decision to issue borrowers with 4 gramophone record tickets (as for books) instead of the previous entitlement of 2. Borrowers were very quick and eager to take advantage of their increased borrowing power. For many years it had been noted that whole families are enrolled as record library borrowers yet all the tickets were used by only one person. Obvicusly there was a need to increase the entitlement and the increased issues have proved the decision to be a wise one.

Continual pressure comes from the borrowers to expand the scope of the record collection. Currently, purchases are made in the field of jazz and folk music but not in "pop". Obviousiy the dividing line between these categories is very blurred and the decision not to add to stock a particular record is often challenged. It is very evident that a large demand for pop LP records does exist and as readers are very quick to point out it does appear we are using double standards in that we purchase "pop" fiction books but not "pop" records. However, with a record provision of only £4,500, coverage of existing fields of classical and orchestral music, jazz, folk, spoken word, opera, language, etc., is already very thin and excellent recordings in all these fields are already rejected on

financial grounds only. If the coverage were to be extended to such a large and open ended commitment as "pop" records without a proportionately large increase in funds, our existing library users would quickly become dissatisfied with the meagre selection which would be available to them.

Requests for the provision of cassettes continue. Cassette players are now relatively cheap to purchase, are easily portable and are often fitted to cars. More local residents not owning record players possess cassette players so that the demand for the library to supply cassettes is likely to increase. Although originally considered to be more vulnerable than records, experience in other libraries has proved that initial fears were not well grounded.

It is hoped that as soon as the current severe financial difficulties are eased an opportunity can be made to introduce a trial collection of cassettes which will eventually form the nucleus of a full cassette lending library.

The practice of issuing the musical score with the record continues to be popular with borrowers. During the current year the holdings of scores have been increased to meet this demand. Efforts have also continued to build up the special collection allocation for the Hackney Library Services under the Greater London Audio Specialisation Scheme. The two composers whose records fall within our section of the scheme are Richard Strauss and Vivaldi and most of the available recordings of these composers are now held. Due to finance difficulties it has not yet been possible to build up such a complete collection of historical documentary records which is our other responsibility under this scheme. The total fulfilment of this commitment must be reluctantly postponed until an easing of the current difficulties.

Picture Loan Collection

While the stock of pictures has now been increased to a total of 922 many of the pictures within the collection are those originally purchased over ten years ago. These older reproductions are obviously now less attractive, many of them showing fading and other signs of hard wear. It is inevitable

that these are the ones which remain on display, and the casual borrower often gets a very wrong impression of the scope of the collection seeing only the less attractive pictures which remain unissued.

This year, eight original paintings exhibited at the 8th Hackney Art Exhibition were purchased for the collection. These pictures, together with some original prints purchased during the year have proved to be tremendously popular. The oak frames, a feature of the original collection, have been rejected in favour of modern frames of gilt or metal selected to suite the picture. Where necessary pictures are glazed with plastic sheet to protect the picture whilst on loan. The results are very pleasing to the eye and provide an attractive centre piece for any home. Unfortunately pictures of this type are very much the minority in the collection and are issued on the first day they go into circulation. Even when returned they are often immediately renewed when the borrower finds himself faced with the far less attractive and older works currently available for loan. Each year some 50/60 new pictures only can be purchased and it will only be over a period of many years that this side of the collection can be developed to the point where originals form a major part of the collection.

The lack of an adequate selection of attractively framed pictures has unfortunately served to reduce issues slightly from 2,258 in 1972-73 to 1,980 in the current year. The Stamford Hill and Clapton Libraries, however, both show increased issues and it is evident that where adequate facilities for the display of pictures is available, better issues can be achieved. Unfortunately in the larger, older libraries severe space problems make it difficult to make significant improvements in the display facilities although everything that can be done to improve this situation is being done.

Reference and Information Services

The use of reference libraries has further increased, though the bare statistics of 141,447 volumes consulted in 1972-73 and 150,305 in 1973-74 do not, of themselves, provide an adequate measurement of the work done within these

departments. As the staff are only too well aware, what at first appears to be a simple enquiry can involve hours of research within our own and outside resources, and the range of such enquiries is extensive.

The following examples of questions asked illustrate the diversity of enquiries:

Are Serbo-Croatians Catholics?
When was the yellow rose worn by Jews in Italy?
What were the exchange rates of the rouble in the past Century?
What is the legal definition of a kitchen?
What were the "egg feasts" in Oxford?
How should one care for the moths of silk worms?
What is the pH factor of skin?
What is the meaning of "oscillator frequency shift"?
The names and addresses of jewellery wholesalers in the Channel Islands?
How to mount objects in transparent plastic?
What is the origin of "Green Grow the Rushes 'O"?
Who was the 16th century Bishop of Gloucester with the forename Edwin?

Nevertheless, it is still felt that the present use made of these reference services represents only a small proportion of the information needs of the resident and business population and thought is now being given to additional publicity to make more widely known the total scope of the information service and material on offer and to assess the particular needs of special groups.

A beginning has been made with the information needs of both the officers and members within local government and through the wide circulation of the G.L.C.'s Daily Intelligence Bulletin and the Local Government Annotations Service (LOGA) an awareness of the availability of information on a variety of topics is being awakened.

During the year a coin operated photocopier was installed in the Central Library for a trial period. It proved to be so successful that in September 1973, the Committee gave approval

for two additional machines to be installed at the Stoke Newington and Shoreditch District Reference Libraries. The result has been a continuing rise in the number of photocopies produced for use within departments of the Council and for the general public. At the Central Library in April 1973, 456 copies were made and by February 1974 this had increased to 1,899. Similar reports have been received from the other two districts and it would appear that efforts to publicise the availability of this service to local business and industry are now beginning to pay dividends.

Archives

Interest in the Borough's Archives Collection continues to grow, with many personal visits to the department being made by students and researchers. The present very limited accommodation of this section makes the reception of and assistance to these visitors a very real problem, but with the prospect of the move to the purpose built accommodation in the De Beauvoir Library can be accepted more equably by the staff as a "temporary" difficulty. It is also hoped that with this move the staffing position can be improved to allow full public access to the Archive Collection on a regular full-time basis. Postal requests for information continue to be received from all over the world. These requests normally relate to the tracing of ancestors or family history within the locality. They almost always involve considerable research within the collection and even a visit to the site in an attempt to positively identify a particular road or house relevant to the inquiry. However, the letters of thanks received from the far corners of the earth do serve to repay the considerable effort put into this personal service.

A total of 220 illustrations, 139 printed items and 600 manuscripts have been received and catalogued. As in previous years, the illustrations largely represents the continuing photographic survey of sites due to be redeveloped in order that some record of their existing appearance can be preserved.

Deeds were received, by deposit, from the British Records Association, towards whose work this Council makes an annual financial contribution. Other important deposits included

the records of the Federation of London Dividing Friendly Societies 1904-1973 (C.M. Gardner, Esq.) and those of the Clapton Park United Reformed Church ("The Round Chapel") whose history as a Meeting can be traced to 1804. Also in this deposit were the records of the Homerton Benevolent Society, 1793-1898, and we are grateful to the elders of the church for these deposits.

The Royal Wanstead School, Snaresbrook, closed its doors in 1973 and the Trustees deposited the records in Redbridge Central Library. By courtesy of the Borough Librarian, the Archivist was able to microfilm the records that related to the period 1827-1841 when, as the Dalston Infant Orphan Asylum, the institution flourished locally.

As in previous years, assistance has been given to the Council's officers in several Departments, and to a wide variety of organisations including the Hackney Gazette, BBC/ ITV, Hackney W.E.A., World Shakespeare Centre, London Museum, St. Thomas, Upper Clapton (bi-centenary exhibition), and St. John, Brownswood (centenary publication).

Talks have been given to the East London History Society, Jewish Blind Society, Walthamstow Antiquarian Society and the Clapton Park Women's Meeting, whilst, in the field of education two coach tours, for present and prospective teachers, were conducted around the borough, and a talk on the history and development of local government, as illustrated by the local archives, was given to a Sixth Form Conference.

The work of conservation has continued. Work on the Shoreditch Land Tax Assessments 1744-1824 has been largely completed and the restoration of the records of the Shoreditch Parochial School (1707-1879) is now in hand. A great deal of work remains to be done within the Archives. Document repair, like picture conservation, remains an urgent priority although, as in other fields, costs continue to rise. It is hoped that the move to De Beauvoir will provide an opportunity for much of this work to be identified and accomplished if the necessary financial resources are made available.

Inter Library Co-operation

Inter Lending

The number of books borrowed from other libraries to satisfy the needs of Hackney readers has again increased, from 2,850 volumes in 1972-73 to 3,124 volumes in 1973-74. This increase probably reflects our unfortunately increasing tendency to avoid the purchase of volumes for which local demand is considered insufficient or unpredictable. To some extent it may also reflect the failure of booksellers to satisfy purchase orders in under six to eight weeks and the need to borrow to satisfy a student's urgent need programmed to a tutor's requirement.

With the increasing coverage and use of the Computer Output Microfilm location list now regularly received from L.A.S.E.R., the greater number of these requests are arranged direct with the holding library and in this way the time formerly required for postal delays and process through L.A.S.E.R. headquarters can be saved.

Loans to other libraries from our stock fell from 2,961 to 2,717 in the current year. This reduction is in line with the policy of re-routing requests to libraries within the region who do not have a commitment under the Special Subject Collection Scheme.

Special Collections

The Borough still maintains three separate collections of fiction and non-fiction which were allocations formally made to the former Metropolitan Boroughs. The three fiction collections have now been amalgamated and are shelved in the Shoreditch District Library. In spite of the provision of special collection accommodation within the new Homerton Library it has not been possible to merge the three subject collections and they remain at their former Metropolitan locations. The usage of the collections varied considerably but the collection of motor car manuals at Hackney and the collection on cabinet making at Shoreditch both continue to be very well utilised. The maintenance of all three collections

throws a very heavy strain on the library's resources, as the specialist works falling within the scope of these collections are extremely expensive.

The stock of the three collections of non-fiction rose by a further 1,800 volumes during the current year, and are now as follows:

Special Subject Collection	46,339
Joint Fiction Reserve	13,696
Special Collections Periodicals	179
Play Sets	241
Fiction in foreign languages	820

Discussions are still proceeding regarding the reallocations of these collections, with each authority within the L.A.S.E.R. region sharing the responsibility. Undoubtedly this would result in easing the Hackney commitment which would release space and finance for alternative use without the overall coverage of the scheme being affected. It is hoped that these discussions will prove to be fruitful in the near future.

Hospitals and Housebound Readers Service

The approach from the Hackney Group Hospital Management Committee reported in last years annual report was followed through and as a result a full bed-side service was extended to patients in the Hackney Group Hospitals in July 1973. Hospitals in this Group being served are Hackney Hospital, Eastern Hospital, St. John's Hospital, The Mothers Hospital and the German Hospital. Previously these patients had been served by volunteers, many of whom were happy to see the service extended so that they could withdraw knowing that the patients would be continued to be well cared for in terms of book provision. Although their withdrawal complicated an already difficult operation being commenced with minimum staff, minimum book stock and a fairly brief period of preparation, it was considered desirable to get the service moving even if initial arrangements were on a make shift basis. Book stocks are being slowly built up at the various hospitals but the limited book fund makes this a long and difficult process.

The few staff within this service have been under considerable stress with the additional pressures arising from the exacting nature of the service and many days of staff sicknesses within the section. It is apparent that the present staffing level is too low to provide the service which the patients are entitled to expect and which should be equal to that offered to the normally fit and healthy borrower. The staffing provision is currently under review and it is hoped that a revised establishment and grading structure designed to meet the new challenges facing this vital part of the library services will shortly be accepted.

At the request of the Hackney Group Hospital Management Committee the Council also undertook to provide, on an agency basis, a Medical Librarian to organise and administer the service to doctors and nurses.

The service to housebound readers constitutes a small but much appreciated aspect of the Library Service. Books for each borrower have to be carefully selected to ensure that they are the right standard and subject, that the type size is suitable for those with failing eyesight and that they have not previously been issued to them. Each call has to be tailored to meet the borrower's requirements and to ensure that he or she is not at the hospital for treatment or with a visiting nurse. The person delivering the books has to maintain a very tight schedule yet must make the time to chat to the lonely, sympathise with the sick or to help the disabled in some small way. The "library man", or "library lady", as they are known are valued visitors, eagerly expected, criticised if late, and one who must never fail to arrive when expected. He or she must know all the details of where to find the key or how to knock to make sure they are admitted and must be able to cope adequately with very difficult and at times trying people, but the service is one which is greatly appreciated and the staff find immense satisfaction in the appreciation the service earns.

Arts Activities

Hackney Festival '73

This was a major artistic success. Great impetus was

given to the festival as a whole by the initial concert given by Miss Rita Hunter in honour of Dame Eva Turner and attendances at nearly all events approached hall capacity.

The higher standards achieved within each year's festival brings its own problems for the following year. Limited expenditure must however affect future programmes and I am fully aware of the increasing difficulties with which face the Cultural Activities Organiser each year in providing adequate programmes within a limited budget.

Exhibitions

8th Annual Arts Exhibition - Adult Section

Over 1,250 items were entered and 730 of them were shown. Naturally, the size and type of exhibit dictates the amount of space required and thus affects the actual quantity on view. Some 3,721 people visited the exhibition.

The general standard of the paintings was high, that of the craftwork and sculpture, with notable exceptions, was less good.

Children's Section

Of the 980 items entered 970 were shown. The individual schools were asked to assess their own work and to bear in mind the limited space available. As usual, the work was colourful, imaginative and delightful. 3,010 people visited the Exhibition.

Lost Villages of London

This touring Exhibition by the S.E. Area Museums Service was a great disappointment. Though interesting, it was too small and it was necessary to create greater interest by adding to the exhibition a series of watercolours from the local collection.

Arts and Education in Mongolia

Housed at Stamford Hill Library this delightful display of photographs and prints from the People's Republic of Mongolia created much interest and gave some publicity to a small section of our Special Subject Collection.

Chalmers Art Gallery

During most of the period the Art Gallery has been closed for structural alterations. On completion, we find ourselves with one of the most delightful, but most inaccessible galleries in London. It is hoped that numerous directional signs, particularly in nearby Clissold Park, will be erected so that more visitors will be aware of its existence.

Lunch-time Concerts

These recitals serve to introduce new and established artists to the public and the 10 concerts arranged were well attended. Average attendance rose to 85 people against the average of 69 last year.

Orchestral Concerts

The standard of the concerts given by the Hackney Orchestra has been mixed: most of the time distinguished but taking occasional serious dips. There has not been the usual continuity in the complement of the orchestra and financial restrictions have not helped retain musicians of the highest calibre.

After two years of discussion regarding a deputy to the director, arrangements for such an appointment are now in hand. Two very likely young men have been interviewed and it is hoped a concert will be arranged in the summer at which both will be invited to conduct with an independent assessor advising on the appointment.

Six concerts were held and although attendances were generally slightly down on previous years the average remains at 320 persons.

Evening Shows

A varied programme of eleven concerts and three talks was arranged and matinee performances of some shows for schools have again been organised. Attendances at all shows were high, the average being above 500.

It is evident that a great need exists to provide a greater range of entertainment/leisure activities for the 16 to 21 age group. They are somewhat neglected compared with the rest of the community and if further resources can be made available within this field it might be well worth calling an informal meeting of these youngsters to seek their views on the type of activity they would favour.

Organ recitals in association with St. Mary's, Stoke Newington and St. Thomas' Clapton, were also arranged.

Hackney Film Society

Support and help has again been provided for this group. There is still a need for more members if this society is to become self supporting and it is hoped that a group from Hoxton Hall will be persuaded to associate with the society in order to extend its activities.

Staff

A continuing high turnover amongst junior staff seems now to be a permanent feature of the staffing scene. The resultant strain on those who stay eventually reveals itself in a high sickness rate and this has been particularly evident this year.

On top of these difficulties came the fuel crisis with restricted heating and lighting and the staff as a whole are to be commended for the efficient and enthusiastic way in which they kept the service at an operational level without a single breakdown. The staff at the Somerford Grove branch are particularly praised for the way they endured temperatures of 45^{o} in early mornings, rising to a maximum of 50^{o} by late evenings, without complaint.

The following members of staff have been successful in academic and professional examinations:

Miss S. Adams - 'A' Level Sociology & Pottery
Mr. M. Allen - Open University 2nd level & 3rd level course
Miss U. Daly - 'A' Level English & Latin
Miss J. Francis - 'A' Level English Literature & History
Mrs. D. Howard - Library Association Part 2
Mr. M. Howard - 'O' Level History
Mrs. A. Kane - 'A' Level British Constitution
Mr. K. Kerr - Diploma Municipal Administration Completed
Mr. T. Levett - 'A' Level Economics & History
Mr. M. McCann - Library Association Part 1
Miss A. MacDonald - 1st year Open University Foundation Course/Humanities
Miss S. Mills - 'O' Level History
Miss S. Powell - 'O' Level Human Biology
Miss J. Ranson - Library Association Part 2
Miss M. Rogers - 'O' Level English Literature
Mr. J. Thorpe - Library Association Part 2, Papers A3, B13, B91
Mr. R. Tidmarsh - Library Association Part 2 Completed

The success of any service depends upon the efforts of a number of people and the Library Service is no exception. I am grateful to a loyal and enthusiastic staff; to my colleagues in other departments who provide the legal, engineering, financial, personnel services, etc., without which the service would operate less efficiently; and to the Chairman and members of the Committee who show their own enthusiasm for the service in their eagerness to see its development continue despite all difficulties.

C.J. LONG
Borough Librarian

Statistics - General

	1972/73	1973/74
Population	215,270	213,020
1p Rate Product	£140,000	£328,000
Library Rate in the £	4.69p	2.34p
No. of separate library buildings	19	19
No. of staff in Libraries Department		
Professional	92	81
Non-Professional (ex. Saturday Assistants)	74	85
Manual	36	35

Financial

	1972/73	1973/74
Income	£	£
From library rate	666,610	768,505
Fees and fines	10,209	8,000
From other sources	2,407	4,130
	679,226	780,635
Expenditure		
Salaries	340,481	384,000
Wages	54,599	64,000
Repairs and maintenance	7,041	8,700
Furniture and fittings	1,252	1,400
Fuel, light, cleaning and water	20,650	21,780
Rent and rates	30,724	37,600
Equipment, clothing and laundry	1,847	2,170
Transport	4,699	5,200
Printing, stationery and publicity	6,210	6,600
Postage	4,002	4,800
Telephones	2,263	2,800
Travelling and insurance	1,740	2,020
Central Establishment Charges	26,720	36,030
Subscriptions	1,450	1,600
Miscellaneous	63	-
Loan charges	29,381	49,370
Books and binding	111,248	125,000
Periodicals and newspapers	4,971	5,500
Gramophone records	4,297	4,700
Picture loan collection	527	650
Special Activities	945	950
National Book Week	501	-
R.C.C.O.	2	-
Recharge from Housing Committee - Management Expenses	50	80
Special items - repairs and maintenance	13,562	4,085
	669,225	769,035
Arts Activities	4,376	5,250
Arts Festival	5,625	6,350
	679,226	780,635

TABLE 1 - BOOK STOCKS

	LENDING				REFERENCE		
	Adult		Children				
HACKNEY	Fic	N.Fic	Fic	N.Fic	Adult	Children	Total
Central Library	35,744	75,480	4,866	6,217	41,415	338	164,060
Clapton	7,809	10,625	5,788	4,393	-	-	28,615
Dalston	6,127	8,149	3,680	4,041	-	-	21,997
Homerton	7,661	6,395	5,836	4,292	-	-	24,184
Parkside	8,493	2,344	1,751	1,503	-	-	14,091
Kingsmead	6,246	955	1,882	829	-	-	9,912
Eastway	3,289	312	1,295	818	-	-	5,714
STOKE NEWINGTON							
District Library	11,764	22,549	6,561	6,928	28,882	341	77,025
Brownswood	8,110	7,230	3,260	2,475	-	-	21,075
Howard	4,816	2,055	3,171	2,727	-	-	12,769
Woodberry Down	10,338	9,663	3,763	3,961	-	-	27,725
Stamford Hill	17,598	21,984	6,069	6,064	-	-	51,715
Somerford Grove	5,312	3,688	2,220	1,359	-	-	12,579
SHOREDITCH							
District Library	9,798	27,945	3,269	3,669	22,965	194	67,840
Haggerston	8,493	6,516	156	170	-	-	15,335
Goldsmith's Row	4,432	4,223	2,235	2,633	-	-	13,523
Wenlock	5,494	3,892	1,730	1,689	-	-	12,805
Englefield	6,074	944	1,646	1,268	-	-	9,932
Kate Greenaway	511	370	4,811	4,913	-	-	10,605
Hosp. & Housebound	8,507	1,466	-	-	-	-	9,973
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS							
Hackney	-	22,328	-	-	-	-	22,328
Stoke Newington	-	14,351	-	-	-	-	14,351
Shoreditch	13,696	8,423	-	-	-	-	22,119
Schools Collection	-	-	3,752	3,607	-	-	7,359
	190,312	261,887	67,741	63,556	93,262	873	677,631

TABLE 2 - BOOK ISSUES

	LENDING		REFERENCE		TOTAL	
	Adult	Children	Adult	Children		
	73-4	73-4	73-4	73-4	72-3	73-4
HACKNEY						
Central Library	318,541	49,363	47,837	2,191	431,039	417,932
Clapton	127,401	57,726	3,072	2,211	193,866	190,410
Dalston	95,314	34,778	2,097	1,530	143,936	133,719
Homerton	80,331	43,899	1,934	1,441	128,893	127,605
Parkside	56,379	28,166	687	651	96,273	85,883
Kingsmead	13,057	15,596	-	-	31,239	28,653
Eastway	13,866	5,738	-	-	23,189	19,604
STOKE NEWINGTON						
District Library	147,074	63,523	37,123	2,271	258,773	249,991
Brownswood	92,181	28,787	2,588	1,705	128,245	125,261
Howard	29,100	27,383	1,560	2,173	67,199	60,216
Woodberry Down	100,913	22,617	1,229	1,582	136,798	126,341
Stamford Hill	192,391	75,164	4,135	3,433	296,120	275,123
Somerford Grove	47,721	21,564	2,310	2,244	75,512	73,839
SHOREDITCH						
District Library	108,992	28,042	37,333	1,118	172,496	175,485
Haggerston	51,048	-	4,158	-	61,748	55,206
Goldsmith's Row	38,528	21,732	2,352	2,582	66,998	65,194
Wenlock	42,555	15,228	1,862	1,737	62,971	61,382
Englefield	16,367	7,539	28	-	26,255	23,934
Kate Greenaway	-	44,967	-	1,843	50,091	46,810
Hospitals Service & I.B.'s	79,380	4,544	-	-	74,914	83,924
	1,651,139	596,356	150,305	28,712	2,526,555	2,426,512

TABLE 3 - BOOKS ON LOAN AT 31st MARCH

	Adult		Children		Total	
	1973	1974	1973	1974	1973	1974
HACKNEY						
Central Library	17,540	16,084	4,615	4,951	22,155	21,035
Clapton	5,591	6,693	4,584	4,484	10,175	11,177
Dalston	5,047	5,329	2,700	3,169	7,747	8,498
Homerton	3,631	4,501	3,641	3,559	7,272	8,060
Parkside	3,062	2,958	1,917	1,963	4,979	4,921
Kingsmead	548	636	971	1,032	1,519	1,668
Eastway	806	779	434	393	1,240	1,172
STOKE NEWINGTON						
District Library	10,166	10,690	4,990	4,885	15,156	15,575
Brownswood	4,982	5,414	2,129	2,257	7,111	7,671
Howard	1,765	2,016	2,077	3,077	3,842	5,093
Woodberry Down	5,524	5,342	1,439	1,628	6,963	6,970
Stamford Hill	*12,831	*12,000	5,743	5,598	18,574	17,598
Somerford Grove	2,301	2,474	1,336	1,427	3,637	3,901
SHOREDITCH						
District Library	7,246	8,624	2,864	3,002	10,110	11,626
Haggerston	2,946	2,803	-	-	2,946	2,803
Goldsmith's Row	1,944	2,106	1,138	1,360	3,082	3,466
Wenlock	2,269	2,124	889	962	3,158	3,086
Englefield	925	1,022	674	526	1,599	1,548
Kate Greenaway	-	-	3,941	4,385	3,941	4,385
Hospitals Service	3,315	4,190	78	90	3,393	4,280
*Estimated	92,439	95,785	46,160	48,748	128,599	144,533

TABLE 4 - REGISTRATION OF READERS

	1972/73		1973/74		Total Registered Readers at 31.3.74.		
	Adult	Children	Adult	Children	Adult	Children	Total
HACKNEY							
Central Library	4,805	1,295	4,615	1,187	9,420	2,482	11,902
Clapton	1,800	1,098	1,837	1,029	3,637	2,127	5,764
Dalston	1,655	677	1,685	729	3,340	1,406	4,746
Homerton	1,263	971	1,109	838	2,372	1,809	4,181
Parkside	717	505	656	461	1,373	966	2,339
Kingsmead	163	261	108	225	271	486	757
Eastway	149	90	188	138	337	228	565
STOKE NEWINGTON							
District Library	2,444	944	2,476	932	4,920	1,876	6,796
Brownswood	1,023	257	1,011	336	2,034	593	2,627
Howard	417	435	482	474	899	909	1,808
Woodberry Down	1,349	429	1,339	431	2,688	860	3,548
Stamford Hill	3,616	1,308	3,025	1,339	6,641	2,647	9,288
Somerford Grove	638	404	584	398	1,222	802	2,024
SHOREDITCH							
District Library	1,545	812	1,872	636	3,417	1,448	4,865
Haggerston	920	-	878	-	1,798	-	1,798
Goldsmith's Row	445	245	394	269	839	514	1,353
Wenlock	617	316	544	226	1,161	542	1,703
Englefield	230	207	207	163	437	370	807
Kate Greenaway	41	505	60	639	101	1,144	1,245
	23,837	10,759	23,070	10,450	46,907	21,209	68,116

TABLE 5 - GRAMOPHONE RECORD LIBRARIES

	Stock		Total Membership		Issues	
	1972/73	1973/74	1972/73	1973/74	1972/73	1973/74
Hackney Central	9,039	9,945	2,210	2,029	26,342	32,534
Stoke Newington	4,564	4,877	899	969	14,487	17,276
Stamford Hill	3,984	4,523	1,410	1,314	15,081	17,056
Shoreditch	5,141	5,105	543	508	8,201	9,933
	22,728	24,450	5,062	4,820	64,111	76,799

TABLE 6 - PICTURE LOAN COLLECTION

	Stock		Issues	
	1972/73	1973/74	1972/73	1973/74
Hackney Central	306	325	896	689
Clapton	*54	66	*100	137
Stoke Newington	238	249	539	472
Stamford Hill	124	133	410	433
Shoreditch	140	149	313	249
* Nine month's issues only	862	922	2,258	1,980